

null
Lucia A Keegan 09/05/2006 05:28:08 PM From DB/Inbox: Lucia A Keegan

Cable
Text:

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 05853

SIPDIS
cyparis:
ACTION: UNESCO
INFO: POL ECON AMBU AMB AMBO DCM SCI

DISSEMINATION: UNESCOX
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:LOLIVER
DRAFTED: CHARGE:AKOSS
CLEARED: NONE

VZCZCFRI530
OO RUEHC RUEHGV RUCNDT RUEHTV RUEHEE
DE RUEHFR #5853 2431256
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 311256Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0892
INFO RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2479
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0875
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0551
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 005853

SIPDIS

FROM USMISSION UNESCO PARIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/31/2016
TAGS: [UNESCO](#) [SCUL](#) [LE](#)
SUBJECT: (U)UNESCO: LEBANON RESOLUTION UPDATE III

REF: A. PARIS 5463 (notal), B. PARIS 5653 (notal), C. PARIS 5768

Classified by DCM Andrew Koss, reasons 1.4(d).

¶1. (C) Summary: UNESCO's first evaluation mission has returned from Lebanon. While the mission leader's first report uses dramatic language to describe the situation on the ground, the Director-General (DG) issued a press release on August 30 that is decidedly more neutral and lists the particular areas where UNESCO will assist without any polemics. The Israeli ambassador to UNESCO has been instructed that his government may now consider a resolution that treats both countries as victims. The DG's executive assistant and the Assistant Director General for Culture say that they will help ensure that language in the resolution is as neutral as possible. End summary.

¶2. (U) UNESCO's first evaluation mission has returned from Lebanon and issued several reports. While most of the reports remain technical in nature and cover topics such as education and cultural monuments, the cover paper engages in polemics and talks about the extensive destruction to Lebanon and the number of people displaced. These reports were not widely circulated outside of the secretariat.

¶3. (U) On August 30, DG Matsuura issued a press release that is measured in tone, avoids all polemics and deals strictly with the technical work that UNESCO plans to undertake in Lebanon. Those projects will include the repair and refurbishment of 18 vocational schools and work to "help Lebanon's diverse communities overcome possible divisions created by the conflict and to live harmoniously." The DG's press release also notes that Lebanon's World Heritage sites sustained no visible damage, though he does express concern about damage from an oil slick to the old port of Byblos.

¶4. (C) Israeli Ambassador David Kornbluth called Ambassador

Oliver on August 29 to tell her that his government remains very hard line on the issue of a resolution at the Executive Board but may be willing to accept a resolution that deals with Lebanon and Israel as victims. They would not consider a resolution that contained negative language about Israel.

15. (C) Ambassador Oliver separate conversations with Elizabeth Longworth, the DG's chef de cabinet (executive assistant) and Francoise Riviere, the Assistant Director General for Culture. During the conversation with Longworth, Ambassador Oliver emphasized the need for carefully selecting the language that describes the situation. That message seems to have been taken to heart and is reflected in the DG's press release. Riviere, who played a key role in the negotiations over the "cartoon issue" at the last Executive Board, made it clear that she will work for a consensus document and intends to oppose language that will politicize the Organization. (Comment: Riviere did a good job working for these goals during the cartoon negotiations.)

16. (U) (Comment) We are still probably two weeks from the emergence of an actual resolution. So far at least, the Director General and his senior staff are trying to steer the conversation in a positive direction. It remains to be seen if the Arab group will be as conciliatory.

Oliver